

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Two recent marine-related grants awarded to the Central Coast are evidence of a growing concern for our oceans and marine ecosystems. Both grants also support extensive efforts by Rep. Sam Farr (D-Carmel) to protect these resources, including his work to pass Oceans-21, which would establish a national oceans policy.

The U.S. Department of Commerce has awarded \$377,580 to the Elkhorn Slough Foundation for research, geospatial analysis and stewardship programs. The foundation, based in Moss Landing, Calif., funds a variety of projects related to water quality, marsh loss, invasive species removal and volunteerism.

"The National Estuarine Research Reserve System provides a base from which researchers can study the estuary ecosystem and the impacts different activities have on it," said Rep. Farr. "This research is one step toward a broader ecosystem-based management, an integral part of ocean and wetland conservancy."

The National Oceanographic Partnership Program has also announced it will fund a \$1 million grant for a three-year research project at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey. The research will focus on arctic ice melt and will study the effects of global climate change and how technology such as sonar affects sea life.

"The oceans are the lifeblood of our planet, and it's time we care more about what happens to them," said Rep. Farr. "For too long we have abused our role as ocean stewards. We must accept the responsibility to care for them, and funding ocean research is one necessary step toward that goal."

Oceans-21, introduced by Rep. Farr on the first day of Congress this year, would implement the highest priority recommendations of the Joint Ocean Commission, helping secure the full range of benefits that healthy marine ecosystems provide, such as SCUBA-diving, fishing, and surfing. Rep. Farr's bill, H.R. 21, has bipartisan support and has been cosponsored by 56 members of Congress.

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